

**Title:**

Pig Heart Boy

**Author:**

Malorie Blackman

**Blurb:**

You're thirteen. All you want is a normal life. But most normal kids don't need heart transplants. So, there's this doctor. He says there's a chance for you. But he also says it's experimental, controversial and risky. And it's never been done before.

**Author background:**

Malorie Blackman's parents migrated to England from Barbados in 1960 and two years later Malorie was born in London where she continued to live for much of her life. A compulsive reader and writer from a very early age, it seems Malorie was always destined to become an author. However, after being badly advised by a careers officer, she initially ended up studying Computer Science at Thames Polytechnic. However, while working in computing she continued to write and published her first book in 1990. It was then she became a full time writer...and a prolific one at that! She has written over fifty books for children and young adults, probably her most well-known being *Noughts and Crosses*, as well as plays and television scripts. Imaginative and sometimes controversial in subject matter, her books are hugely popular. She has won many awards, including an OBE in 2008 for services to children's literature and was Children's Laureate 2013–2015. She has even been described by The Times as 'a national treasure'.

Malorie Blackman lives in Kent with her husband and daughter and continues to publish exciting novels.

**Cultural background:**

Difficult decisions are explored throughout the book and the reader becomes fully absorbed in Cameron's struggles. There are relevant and engaging issues to explore with teenagers in the classroom:

- The nature of friendship and trust
- Betrayal
- Decisions and morality

The consequences of the transgenic surgery becoming public are that Cameron and his family are hounded by the press and in one disturbing incident Cameron is attacked by an animal rights activist in the street.

## BOOK ANALYSIS

Prejudice is also explored through the reactions of a girl Cameron really likes in school. She rejects him because she is afraid he might have 'germs' from having a pig's heart.

### Literary terms:

### Vocabulary examples:

Transplant – take (living tissue or an organ) and implant it in another part of the body or in another body.  
Research - the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources to establish facts and reach new conclusions.

Cardiovascular – relating to the heart and blood vessels.

Surgery - the branch of medical practice that treats injuries, diseases, and deformities by the physical removal, repair, or readjustment of organs and tissues, often involving cutting into the body.

Circulation – movement to and from or around something, especially that of fluid in a closed system

Paediatric – relating to the branch of medicine dealing with children and their diseases.

Donor – a person who provides blood or an organ for transplant, transfusion, etc.

Transgenic surgery - Xenotransplantation is any procedure that involves the transplantation, implantation or infusion into a human recipient of either live cells, tissues, or organs from a nonhuman animal source.

### Benefits for our children:

Firstly, this book teaches you that you should do what it takes to accomplish what really matters to you. You've got to take the risk for what is most important. It portrays a message that you must be forgiving and never, not ever, be full of yourself and proud – it may take over you. After Cameron got his new heart, he thought he was going to be the same as all the others in his school, but since people reacted to him differently, he thought it was time to grow up and tell everyone he was the same, but he just messed up. This book allows our children to see into the world of science and the developments of science in the wider world.